



## The West Yorkshire Plan

A brighter West Yorkshire that works for all

# Introduction

Here in West Yorkshire, we are ambitious, and not afraid to take on challenges. **This is our plan to create a brighter West Yorkshire that works for all.**

West Yorkshire has always been a place bursting with ideas, energy, and creativity. We are a family with a long history of collaboration borne out of our shared priorities and strong partnerships.

We know that we can only achieve success working together. Our success is dependent on all parts of the region thriving, contributing, being championed and celebrated.

The West Yorkshire Plan sets out an ambitious vision and five missions for 2040 that will drive our work to transform lives and communities across the region. The missions have

been informed by our values and ambitions, whilst being underpinned by robust evidence. They will focus all our work for the long-term and set the framework for our strategies and investments for the future.

The Plan has been developed and will be driven forward by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and five Local Authorities, in consultation and partnership with a range of private, public and voluntary, and community sector partners. No one organisation can deliver these ambitions, it is only by the whole region working together that our vision will be realised.



## Our vision:

A brighter West Yorkshire –  
a place that works for all.  
An engine room of ideas and  
creativity, where anyone  
can make a home.

Our vision and missions put equity, diversity, and inclusion at the heart of everything we do. We will lead the way to embed these values across all our work.

## The West Yorkshire Plan includes:

- **The West Yorkshire story** – our region's unique identity
- **The future of West Yorkshire** – our vision and missions for 2040
- **Working together** – our partnerships for change





## Our missions:

- 1** **Mission 1:**  
A **prosperous** West Yorkshire –  
an inclusive economy with well paid jobs
- 2** **Mission 2:**  
A **happy** West Yorkshire –  
great places and healthy communities
- 3** **Mission 3:**  
A **well-connected** West Yorkshire –  
a strong transport system
- 4** **Mission 4:**  
A **sustainable** West Yorkshire –  
making lives greener
- 5** **Mission 5:**  
A **safe** West Yorkshire –  
a region where everyone can flourish

# The West Yorkshire story

## Our region's unique identity

### Our pioneering heritage

Here in West Yorkshire, we are different. We are single-minded pioneers, determined and hard-working, ambitious, and creative, and not afraid to take on challenges. These traits put us at the forefront of the Industrial Revolution and made us a manufacturing powerhouse of the world.

West Yorkshire has a long history of innovation and industry, delivering economic success alongside social progress. Industrialists such as Sir Titus Salt had a vision for the model village of Saltaire, supporting people out of poverty and into skilled work. Betty Beecroft's courage and ambition developed Kirkstall Forge, one of the oldest, most continuously-used industrial sites in England. Benjamin Gott revolutionised the production of woollen cloth and with his success invested in the cultural and civic life of Leeds.

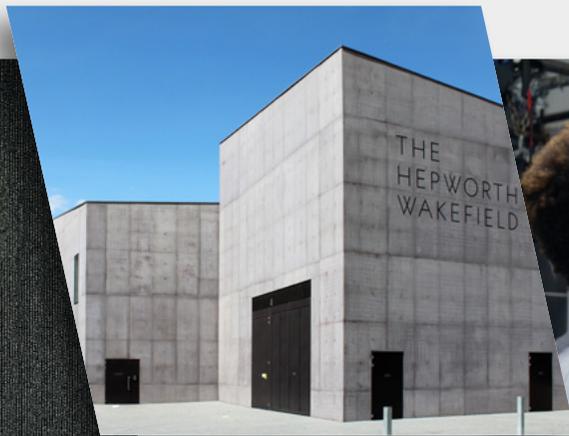
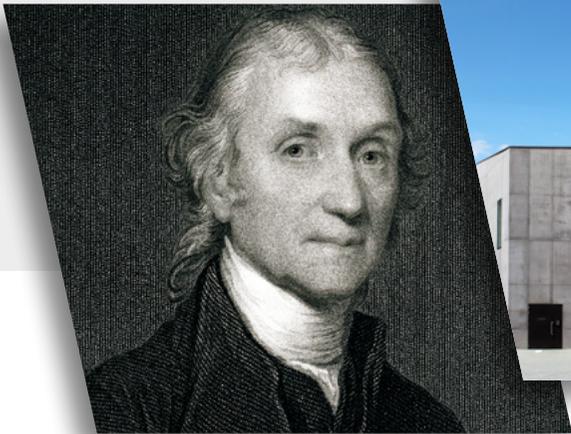
Innovative ideas are our bread and butter, powering the region's success. Our story is filled with ground-breaking discoveries and transformative practices. From firsts in the world of film and transportation, to the production of world-renowned video games and pioneering medical technologies such as Thackary Ltd's work on hip replacements and Paxman Coolers' cancer treatment.

It was our region that connected people across the world, with PACE producing the first low cost, commercially available modem. And it was here that the invention of Cat's Eye technology provided light in the darkness to transform road safety globally.

Pioneering textile technologies created during the Industrial Revolution have developed to become cutting-edge techniques using recycled and recovered plastics.

It's our region that connected people across the world.





Weaving technology is now used to make super-strength jet engine parts.

It was at the University of Leeds that William Bragg's revolutionary research on X-ray crystallography changed the face of modern science. Born in Birstall, Joseph Priestley is credited with the discovery of oxygen and conducted early experiments on the carbon cycle.

Marks & Spencer, one of the most recognisable shops in the country, began from just a small market stall in Leeds.

Towering figures across the arts have been inspired by our places: from the Brontë sisters and the Poet Laureate Simon Armitage, to David Hockney, Anne Lister and Barbara Hepworth, from the countercultural post-punk movement to the biggest pop groups in the world.

We are the birthplace of rugby league, and sporting success runs through our region. From unsung pioneers such as world-beating cyclist Beryl Burton, to extraordinary Olympians and Paralympians like Nicola Adams, the Brownlee brothers, Kadeena Cox and Hannah Cockroft. These inspirational figures show our grit and determination, with their eyes on the prize, they just don't give up.

Once the home of Crossley Carpets, the world's largest carpet manufacturer, Dean Clough is now a vibrant 22-acre mixed-use mill complex. A thriving community which combines arts and culture, leisure facilities, restaurants, bars, cafés, shops, event spaces, offices, and a hotel.

Following decades of neglect, Conditioning House, a Victorian Mill in Bradford has won awards after being converted into modern apartments, office space, a gym and new café, and the stunning but abandoned Temple Works in Leeds will be brought back to life as the home of the British Library North.

We embrace our industrial heritage, paving the way for the emergence of new industries at the cutting edge of health and technology, inventing and manufacturing products that will solve challenges of the future – enabling people to live longer, healthier, and greener lives.

We embrace our industrial heritage, paving the way for the emergence of new industries.

## Contemporary innovation

Throughout our history we have welcomed people to West Yorkshire to help build and shape the places and industries we know today. Now, we build on our past and celebrate our diversity to create a better future. We are proud to be one of the most diverse parts of the UK. We are connected to communities across the world with hundreds of languages spoken. As we look to the future, our diversity will continue to grow, and we will harness this rich tapestry of creative thinkers and passionate voices to champion change.

Our region is home to over 2.4 million people, a workforce of 1.2 million, and around 95,000 businesses.

And it's not just our people who are diverse, our unique places have their own distinct and exciting identities. The globally competitive city of Leeds sits alongside the vibrant cities of Bradford and Wakefield, together with lively towns, stunning countryside, and dynamic rural communities creating places that work for all. West Yorkshire boasts an array of attractions and world class cultural assets such as the beautiful Pennine Moors and Peak District parkland in Kirklees, The Hepworth Wakefield, and Yorkshire Sculpture Park, vibrant market towns in Calderdale, and a Saltaire World Heritage site in Bradford.



Year after year we stage internationally renowned music festivals and celebrations of creativity, with Production Park producing the innovative staging for international artists such as Beyonce and Lady Gaga. The region will rise to the occasion again when Bradford becomes the UK's City of Culture in 2025 with opportunities across all our communities.

Our countryside and green infrastructure are environmental assets that we celebrate and enhance to help us tackle the climate and ecological emergency. Our collection of prosperous cities, thriving market towns and beautiful villages, the urban and the rural, provide a compelling quality of life for residents each with their own unique and magical identity. This interconnected network of urban and rural centres makes West Yorkshire genuinely distinctive.

Our diverse economic structure means we are poised to be a test bed of innovation and new ways of working. An idea can spark here, develop, then cascade to the rest of the country and beyond. We are perfectly positioned to be the key driver of economic growth not just for the North of England, but the whole of the UK.

Our seven world class universities mean we attract and retain talent from around the region and around the world, creating a magnet for international businesses who flock to our region to pioneer innovations in transportation, digital, health, and manufacturing.

Our leading expertise in health, combined with our manufacturing and textiles heritage and growing digital sector means that the region has a vital role to play in the development of the health industry in the UK and



## Key features of our economy include:

- **Advanced manufacturing** – specialisms in textiles, furniture, and clothing
- A fast-growing **digital sector** with major tech employers
- Being a global leader in **healthcare technology** with six government health headquarters – over 22% of the UK’s digital health jobs are based in West Yorkshire
- The UK’s largest regional **finance centre** with international strengths in FinTech including a growing financial cluster of public and private capital
- Our **voluntary and community sector** enables communities to understand, connect, and utilise their innate skills, gifts, and knowledge to drive solutions

beyond. By harnessing and building on these unique strengths, West Yorkshire’s healthcare ecosystem has the potential to solve national and international challenges posed by demographic and social changes, helping people to be well and live well.

Nexus in Leeds and the 3M Buckley Innovation Centre at the University of Huddersfield build on our legacy, innovating and collaborating in energy, transport, health tech, medicines, medical devices, diagnostics, data, and manufacturing.

Using world-leading research facilities, The University of Huddersfield’s Health Innovation Campus will make Huddersfield a national centre for the training of medical practitioners.

But for all these ideas to fly, we need data. West Yorkshire is home to internationally recognised research such as Born in Bradford, bringing new insights into childhood health, while empowering young people to control their own data. Space Hub Yorkshire is driving new satellite and geospatial data markets, attracting collaborations from across the world.

Our region consistently grows and adapts. Our past is woven into our present and we reinvent our brilliant landmarks and buildings ready for the future. The Piece Hall in Halifax, once a centre of trade for the textile industry of West Yorkshire, now attracts millions of global visitors to the area with its mix of independent bars, restaurants, shops, music acts, and art exhibitions.

Leeds Arts University • Leeds Beckett University • Leeds Conservatoire • Leeds Trinity University • University of Leeds • University of Bradford • University of Huddersfield • Bradford College • Calderdale College • Kirklees College • Luminate Education Group • Leeds College of Music • Shipley College • Wakefield College

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## Internationally renowned universities

**hosting around 111,000 students and producing 35,000 graduates each year**

With a unique partnership with Yorkshire universities to ensure that West Yorkshire fully benefits from the research, innovation, and talent pipeline of all our universities

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## Further education colleges

**and a wide range of independent skills providers, including the only specialist construction college in the UK**

Long-standing commitment across the skills sector to collaborate towards creating the best talent in West Yorkshire



# Understanding who we are and where we want to be is key to our future success.

When the Grade-II listed Majestic building in the centre of Leeds was almost destroyed by a fire, it wasn't left to decay, it was rebuilt and now hosts the national headquarters of Channel 4. The derelict mills next to The Hepworth Wakefield are now home to Tileyard North, one of the best recording studios and music engineer training facilities in Europe.

As a region, working together as the West Yorkshire family, we have committed to be net zero carbon, have built new infrastructure, connected our towns and cities, attracted investment, developed land, supported businesses to start-up, innovate and grow, and supported skills and training to power us through the tough times, ready for the exciting opportunities ahead.

Now is our chance to use all that knowledge to cement our status as the go-to place for business, attracting entrepreneurs, investors, developers, and creatives. To seize the opportunities to tackle the challenges we face, from the climate emergency and nature recovery, to deprivation, fuel poverty, and poor health that blights parts of our region.

As a partnership, we will lead the way, learning lessons from our industrial past to create a dynamic, thriving, resilient future. We have the knowledge, the expertise, and the ambition to use these achievements as a catalyst, backed up by our evidence-based policy development to ensure we have the right strategies in place for a brighter future.

We are home to the best and the brightest, in lockstep across the region to deliver a future-focussed West Yorkshire. Kind, hard-working, and friendly people make West Yorkshire the best place to live, raise a family, start a business, and grow old.

Our story inspires us to write a new chapter for West Yorkshire, driven by our vision and steered by five ambitious missions for change. To make our region a place to do well and be well. A place to be happy. **A brighter West Yorkshire that works for all.**



# The future of West Yorkshire

## Our vision and missions for 2040

Our vision for the future is rooted in our region's extraordinary story. **A brighter West Yorkshire – a place that works for all.** An engine room of ideas and creativity where anyone can make a home.

We recognise the value of working together and the benefits this brings. We know that we can't realise our vision in isolation and will continue to work in partnership to bring our ambitions to life.

The missions represent a long-term focus on positive outcomes. There is no simple solution or stand-alone initiative that will deliver the change we want to see. Each mission requires focused action in partnership

between the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. The projects and programmes that we develop, deliver, support, and champion will all be geared towards the missions. Our progress will be demonstrated by a set of targets underpinned by detailed indicators measured annually in our State of the Region report.



# 1

## Mission 1:

# A prosperous West Yorkshire – an inclusive economy with well paid jobs

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### By 2040 we will have:

- **Closed the productivity gap between West Yorkshire and the UK**
- **Living standards above the national average, with no child growing up in poverty**
- **Good quality work available for all**
- **A diverse and inclusive workforce, where everyone who wants to work can**

### Actions for change

Raising the prosperity and real term living standards of all parts of West Yorkshire can only be achieved sustainably by increasing productivity. To do this we will create the conditions to boost the economy so we can see highly skilled, healthy people working in well-paid jobs growing the presence of high productivity businesses and sectors. We will support an environment where entrepreneurial activity is nurtured and can flourish, where it is easy for businesses to start-up, grow, innovate, trade, and invest.

We will support businesses to be resilient, meeting the challenges of the future and embracing the opportunities of digital transformation. We will attract investment and jobs from overseas into our communities and support our businesses to export so that what's made in West Yorkshire is sold to the world.

We will ensure our employers recognise the value of a diverse workforce and invest in talent to develop the skills and progression we need. Where lifelong learning is part of our culture and flexible opportunities meet the needs of business.

We will build integrated infrastructure, attracting investment to create jobs in well-connected places. We will lead on innovation, continuing to build an open, inclusive, and thriving innovation ecosystem, connecting people to stimulate ideas for new products and services, driving investment to meet the challenges of the future.

We will address inequalities experienced by people, communities, and businesses, putting this at the forefront of decisions, whilst celebrating the breadth of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the region.

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### Progress will be demonstrated by improvements in:

- **Productivity levels**
- **Number of jobs paying the living wage**
- **Living standards**
- **Child poverty**
- **Skill levels, apprenticeship starts, and people without employability skills**
- **The employment rate and percentage of employees in quality work**
- **The employment rate gap for disadvantaged groups**
- **Growth in key sectors**



## Mission 2:

# A happy West Yorkshire – great places and healthy communities

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### By 2040 we will have:

- **Happy communities living in well-connected, active neighbourhoods with access to culture and green spaces**
- **A truly affordable and high-quality housing offer, meeting the needs of people and communities**
- **Healthy life expectancy equalling the national average**

### Actions for change

We want our region to be a happy place to live with truly affordable homes, putting the wellbeing of our people at the forefront of our agenda. We will ensure that where you live helps promote good health, active lives, and wellbeing, and that life expectancy aligns with the national average. We will use our status as a major player in global health innovation and our significant health assets to support the health and wellbeing of everyone.

We will ensure that people can live in affordable and sustainable homes, making the most of clean technologies of the future.

We will put culture and heritage at the heart of our economy, where creative businesses are encouraged to start-up and grow. Where everyone in West Yorkshire can enjoy our world-class cultural, heritage, and sporting assets. Where no matter where you live, you'll have access to get in and get on in the creative industries.

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### Progress will be demonstrated by improvements in:

- **Healthy life expectancy**
- **Access to green space**
- **Activity levels/ participation in sport**
- **Wellbeing levels**
- **Access to culture**
- **Broadband and mobile coverage**
- **Participation in culture, sport, and heritage**
- **Housing affordability, sustainability, and quality**
- **Housing supply including social housing**
- **Renting costs**
- **Building energy efficiency and reducing the percentage of households in fuel poverty**



### Mission 3:

# A well-connected West Yorkshire – a strong transport system

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#### By 2040 we will have:

- **A sustainable, accessible transport system**
- **Reliable and affordable buses, trains, and mass transit**
- **A region with healthy people where active travel is the easiest choice for short journeys, car usage is reduced, and the first choice for travel is public transport**

#### Actions for change

We will develop an integrated, affordable, sustainable, reliable and resilient transport system that connects all parts of our region so everyone can access the places they need to live fulfilled lives, boosting productivity, increasing innovation, and creating jobs. We will work collaboratively to ensure West Yorkshire has robust connections across the UK and the world.

We will tackle the climate emergency through the fair and inclusive decarbonisation of our transport network, delivering the right choice of transport, in the right place, at the right time.

We will make sure everyone can enjoy walking and cycling to ensure good health, and a cleaner, greener environment for future generations.

We will make our transport system easier to use and understand, so quick, joined-up journeys become second nature to us all with a London-style transport network.

We will have a new mass transit system for West Yorkshire by 2040, connecting communities with an integrated cycling, walking, bus and rail plan. This bold investment will deliver a transformational transport system to benefit generations to come.

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#### Progress will be demonstrated by improvements in:

- **Access to employment for deprived areas**
- **Punctuality and reliability of bus and rail services**
- **Mode share moving from car use to public transport and active travel**
- **Satisfaction with public transport**
- **Satisfaction with transport information sources**
- **Satisfaction with affordability of public transport**



## Mission 4:

# A sustainable West Yorkshire – making lives greener

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### By 2040 we will have:

- **A net zero carbon economy by 2038**
- **Growth in the green economy in West Yorkshire**

### Actions for change

We will deliver a fair and just net zero economy where people have the skills and opportunity to access new jobs in the green sector and start now to inspire and harness the creativity and commitment of the next generation to innovate solutions for the planet. Where transport is sustainable and energy efficient homes ensure fuel poverty is abolished. Where businesses and industry operate efficiently, reducing energy consumption and boosting regional productivity.

We will create a sustainable, nature-rich and climate ready region, supporting our businesses to capitalise on the opportunities of a carbon-free economy and building resilience for the climate challenges of the future. We will celebrate, protect, and invest in our natural environment, supporting biodiversity, enhancing our green spaces, parks, rivers, canals and moorland.

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### Progress will be demonstrated by improvements in:

- **Reductions in greenhouse gas emissions**
- **Emissions intensity**
- **Access to green and blue infrastructure**
- **Biodiversity**
- **Transport and household emissions**
- **Electric buses and EV charging points**



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## Mission 5:

# A safe West Yorkshire – a region where all can flourish

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### By 2040 we will have:

- **Neighbourhood crime below the average for comparable areas**
- **Lower rates of reoffending**
- **Raise confidence in the police and improve feelings of safety amongst women and girls in West Yorkshire**

### Actions for change

We will build a safe, just, and inclusive region that puts the safety of women and girls at its heart; ensuring all people feel safe, particularly in the night-time economy. We will work tirelessly to ensure that all people who live, work, and visit West Yorkshire are safe and feel safe so our communities can thrive. We will tackle the place-based crime that damages people's everyday lives through an ongoing commitment to Neighbourhood Policing and partnership working in localities.

We will raise confidence in the police and increase victims' readiness to report crime.

We will support those with complex needs, understanding the challenges in our urban and rural areas to support all victims of crime. We will intervene early to protect the most vulnerable whilst lowering crime rates across the region.

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### Progress will be demonstrated by improvements in:

- **Reduction in neighbourhood crime**
- **Reduction in knife crime**
- **Reduction in overall re-offending rate**
- **Improved feelings of safety across the community but especially among women and girls**

# Working together

## Our partnerships for change

To deliver our missions and meet our 2040 vision, collaboration is key.

The scale of our ambition cannot be achieved in isolation. In West Yorkshire we have a proud history of partnerships which we continue to harness, bringing our passion and pride along with local, national, and international partners to build success.

The strength of partnership between private sector and all parts of the public sector is something we are particularly proud of. By bringing together local and regional government, with health, the police, business and the voluntary sector, we work collaboratively to help create the right conditions for investment and jobs to flourish and for people to be healthy. Our region has much to offer, with abundant opportunities for growth, and is a test bed of

innovation and ideas. We know what we need to do and how to do it.

The scale of the opportunities for our region, and the challenges we must overcome will require additional investment and powers. Of particular importance is further developing our partnership with national government and national and international private sector partners.

West Yorkshire is a trusted partner that delivers.

Through our trusted and established partnerships, we will harness our assets to realise these opportunities for the people and the places of West Yorkshire, creating **a brighter West Yorkshire that works for all.**





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The West Yorkshire Plan has been developed and will be driven forward by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and five Local Authorities, in consultation and partnership with a range of private, public and voluntary and community sector partners. No one organisation can deliver these ambitions, it is only by the whole region working together that our vision will be realised.

#WYPlan2040